

COMMITTEE STATEMENT

LB 1092

HEARING DATE: February 1, 2000

COMMITTEE ON: Agriculture

TITLE: (Robak, Dierks, Janssen, Jones, Schmitt, Tyson) Provide for a state meat inspection pilot program

ROLL CALL VOTE – FINAL COMMITTEE ACTION

Advanced to General File

X Advanced to General File with Amendments

Indefinitely Postponed

Vote Results:

5	Yes	Senators Cudaback, Dickey, Dierks, Hilgert, and Janssen
1	No	Senator Vrtiska
0	Present, not voting	
2	Absent	Senators Chambers and Schrock

PROPOSERS

Senator Jennie Robak
Dr. Butch Kruckenberg
Dr. Mike Pierce
Louis LaRose
Robert Melcher
Loran Schmit
Bill Peters

REPRESENTING

Introducer
Kansas Dept. of Agriculture
Kansas Dept. of Agriculture
Winnebago Tribe
Himself
Himself
Nebraska State Buffalo Association

OPPOSERS

None

REPRESENTING

NEUTRAL

Steve Cady
Dennis Schardt
Craig Schroeder

REPRESENTING

Nebraska Pork Producers Association
Nebraska Association of Meat Producers
Nebraska Rural Development Commission

SUMMARY OF PURPOSE AND/OR CHANGES:

LB 1092 provides that the Department of Agriculture shall implement a 4-year pilot program of state meat inspection at small and medium-sized processors. The intent of the bill is that inspection would be provided only where voluntarily requested. It is

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contemplated that participation would be limited as only two meat inspectors are provided for under the bill.

Meat inspection is to comply with the Nebraska Meat and Poultry Inspection Law and applicable federal regulations promulgated pursuant to the Federal Meat Inspection Act (21 U. S. C. 601 et. seq.) and the Poultry Products Inspection Act (21 U. S. C. 451 et. seq.). The bill states intent that the cost of the program be split 50% federal funds and 50% state funds. (i.e. the state program would be operated to qualify for certification for state-federal cooperative agreement under the applicable federal laws). A fee of \$150 dollars would be charged to each processor wishing to participate.

The program would be evaluated for level of participation after three years. The program would be terminated if less than five processors are utilizing state meat inspection within one year after hiring the meat inspectors.

EXPLANATION OF AMENDMENTS, IF ANY:

The committee amendments strike section 2 of the bill and add new sections essentially rewriting the bill in a manner which reflects the process for gaining federal certification of a state meat and poultry inspection program and for entering into a cooperative agreement with the United States Department of Agriculture for provision of financial and other assistance.

The amendments state legislative intent that the Department of Agriculture shall implement a pilot program of state meat inspection beginning August 1, 2000, and states further legislative intent that inspection shall be limited to small-to-medium sized establishments. The Department is authorized to employ a program administrator to coordinate all activities necessary in order to prepare a state performance plan satisfying requirements for certification of the state meat inspection program. The Department of Agriculture is authorized to enter into cooperative agreements with the United States Secretary of Agriculture for the maintenance of a state program of meat and poultry inspection.

The amendments further provide that the Department of Agriculture and the Agriculture Committee shall provide a report to the Legislature on or before December 15, 2000. Such report shall:

1. enumerate and describe actions necessary to implement state meat inspection;
2. recommend any necessary changes in the Department's relevant authorities;
3. discuss potential participation level and types of inspection activity; and,
4. provide a description of resources needed to implement state meat inspection.

The pilot program would be terminated January 1, 2005. An evaluation of processor participation and the economic impact of plants utilizing state meat inspection would be performed after the third year. The program would be terminated anytime after August 1, 2003 if state meat inspection is being maintained at fewer than 5 establishments.

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Senator